

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

2 2nd CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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HINCHEY REQUESTS ENVIRONMENTAL & SAFETY REVIEWS OF SAUGERTIES CANDLE FACTORY

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Rep. Maurice Hinchey announced today that he has called upon the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Ulster County Health Department to investigate health and safety concerns involving the American Candle factory in Saugerties.

"Constituents have come to me with very serious concerns about the impact that this operation is having on the surrounding neighborhoods," said Hinchey. "Residents have experienced eye irritations, headaches, nausea and dizziness at times. The odor has been so overwhelming at times that outdoor activities are impossible."

Hinchey cited the reported health effects in letters to DEC Commissioner Erin Crotty and Ulster County Public Health Director Dean Palen. He requested investigations of residents' allegations by both agencies and urged the DEC to conduct air sampling of the factory's emissions.

"We must also be concerned about the plant's employees," Hinchey said. "A routine inspection by the Town of Saugerties Building Department documented many serious worker safety violations, including blocked exits, lack of sprinkler coverage, poor indoor air quality and other unsafe working conditions. Such violations clearly endanger the health and lives of American Candle employees."

Hinchey urged OSHA Area Director John Tomich to follow up on the Building Department's inspection and conduct its own investigation of safety conditions within the plant.